

Projekte Anweisungen

In order to create successful projects, students will need ample time to work on the projects. I suggest that you have your students start working on the projects as soon as possible when you begin teaching the unit. In the project descriptions, I suggested that students work in groups of 4-6. You can adjust the size of the groups to fit your teaching setting. You can also adjust the length of the projects to fit your setting.

When my students have worked on similar projects in the past, I have noticed that they tend to focus on the non-language aspects of the project more than the language aspects of the project. Students can easily waste a lot of time fiddling with scene transitions or special effects and not bother with producing high quality language in their project. I suggest that you communicate multiple times to your students that the German language in the project is the highest priority.

Students can also easily get bogged down with technology. This is particularly true when the try to make a movie out of hundreds of very short video clips. Students have a tendency to try to string many short (two or three second long) clips rather than only a few longer clips into their movie. I find that my students create better films if they make video clips of entire scenes rather than many short clips from different angles. Students should be aware of this during the planning stage so that they can plan the movie effectively.

All of these projects can be completed with software that is easily available. For the movies, students can use iMovie for Mac or MovieMaker for PC. Both of these softwares come preinstalled on Macs or PCs. Students could even create their movie entirely on an iPad, iPhone, or iTouch with the iMovie app. Many other softwares would also work well. Students can use a video camera or the video function on a regular digital camera. Make sure the software you choose to use will work with the video format that your camera produces. You may need to download and install a free video codec packet. I suggest the K-Light codec pack (http://www.free-codecs.com/download/k_lite_codec_pack.htm). In many cases, the video function on a cell phone camera would work as well. Test everything before you start the project to make sure it will work for you.

Your students will be able to easily produce a radio play (Hörspiel) with Garage Band for Mac or with the free software Audacity for Mac or PC. You can download the installer for Audacity at <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>. If you choose to use audacity, take note that you need to download another file (lame encoder) if you want to export your project as an MP3. There are specific instructions for how to do this at <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/help/faq?s=install&i=lame-mp3>. You will need a computer microphone to complete this project. Inexpensive microphones are available at all computer stores for around \$15. Your students can get a wide variety of sound effects and royalty free music at Soundzabound (<http://www.soundzabound.com/>). Some states, some districts, and some schools have purchased a state-wide license to use this website for free. Talk with your school librarian to find out if your state, district, or school have purchased a license.

The graphic novel is probably the most difficult of the projects. There are probably still some students who will choose this format for their project because of their interests and hobbies. The best software to use to make a graphic novel is ComicLife (<http://plasq.com/products/comicliffe/mac>). Many schools and school districts have district-wide site licenses for ComicLife. Many school Mac computers come with ComicLife preinstalled. If you do not have a copy of ComicLife, you can purchase an educator's license for \$19.99

(<https://store6.esellerate.net/store/checkout/CustomLayout.aspx?s=STR7424382398&pc=&page=MultiCatalog.htm>). Students could also produce a graphic novel with PowerPoint or Keynote and then save the final product as a PDF. Students can draw their own art or they could stage photos for the graphic novel. Another option for the graphic novel is that the no-technology option. Students who feel more comfortable could produce their graphic novel completely with pencil and paper.

You can have your students work on their projects during class or as homework. I have found that my students produce better projects if I give them time in class to work on the projects. If you need to reserve space in a school computer lab for the students to work on the projects, I think it would be wise to sign up for more days than you think you might need just in case. Larger technology projects tend to take longer than anticipated.

Whenever I do a larger technology project with my students, we always run into some unexpected bumps in the road. Technology projects rarely come off without a hitch. If you plan ahead and remain flexible, I think you will be able to adjust to whatever happens during the process. Perhaps the biggest mistake I have made in the past has been to assume that all of my students already know how to use the software or interact with the technology. Of course there will be students who take to the project like fish to water. There will also be students who have less experience with technology and are even a little scared of the project. I think it is always a good policy to plan on training the students (at least briefly) on how to use the technology.

Finally, make your expectations very clear. This is true for the quality of the project as well as the length of time that you intend to spend on the project. If you make your expectations clear, plan ahead, remain flexible, and take time to train students on how to interact with the technology, I am convinced that you will have a successful experience with these projects, and the students will have fun. If you would like to collaborate with me in any way, please feel free to email me at

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